


It's been said, "The true journey never ends."
I've lived that way, as you know, my friends,
Though some believe in "the other side,"
Let's assume I've just gone around the bend.

Tomorrow at coffee I'll hope that you grin,
And wonder what trouble I've found myself in.
For if there were only two paths to take, as they say,
I'll be pushing a side lead where nobody's been.

Be courageous and daring, and know in your heart
Happiness takes effort right from the start.
And if you don't quite fit in, "that's a blessing," I'd say.
Togetherness is sweeter when we've stood apart.

So go off, get busy, and get something done,
Struggle and anguish are the best kind of fun.
Then sit around endlessly watching grass grow,
My bones are fertilizing the roots from below.
Seek peace for all as you stand in my sun.



Tim Harrison

May 17, 1950 - December 21, 2020



Dear loved ones,

Upon cleaning out Tim's things, I found this beautiful and poignant poem that he had written. Thank you for the outpouring of love, kindness and support that keeps him alive in our hearts and souls.

-Tim Harrison Eulogy, Really a Mini Memoir-

The Man, The Myth, The Legend

May 17, 1950 – December 21, 2020

Early Years

Timothy Bart Harrison was born May 17, 1950 in South St. Louis. He lived with his parents and three sisters in a 100-year-old, two-story house in a neighborhood now known as Tower Grove South.



Tim's Dad Arthur (Art), Scot Irish with blonde hair and blue eyes, and his Mom Mary, an olive-skinned Hungarian beauty with dark eyes, raised their four children, daughters Sandy, Cindy and Deb, and son, Tim. Art referred to his wife Mary as "my gypsy" – and we wonder where Tim got his looks and his wanderlust!!??



Art provided for his family as a shipping clerk at the old Railway Express Agency for his entire career. He also had a side business, created by his love of trees – he was a master tree trimmer. The name of his company was "Chipo Tree Service."

Art loved to swim, and even swam across the Mississippi River. He was also an accomplished diver (from being in the Navy during WWII and learning many aspects about diving from the Japanese). Art pursued his love of diving by taking the Greyhound Bus to Acapulco two consecutive years with his wife Mary and daughter Deb – seeking a way to dive off the cliffs! Deb got to go since she was the Spanish interpreter for the trip. While Art wasn't permitted to dive, the trip was filled with enormous adventure for everyone!

Art wasn't afraid of anything! He took risks and was adventurous. From a very young age, Tim began learning about the outdoors. From his father's love of trees and everything outdoors, to his risk-taking, adventurous soul - these traits fell squarely on Tim's shoulders and would stay with him for the remainder of his life.

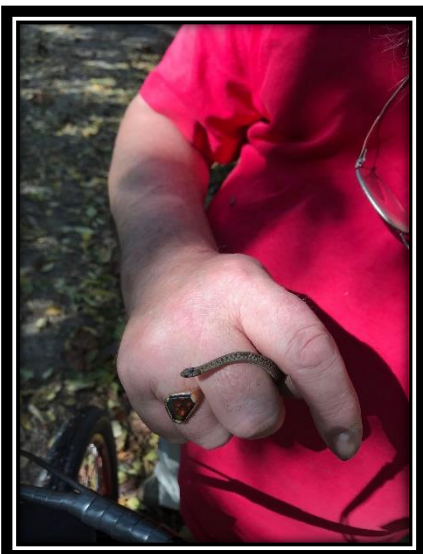


Art's adventurous nature was in stark contrast to his mother Mary. She was quite the opposite. She was a "protector" and became very anxious about her son's adventures. Mary wanted Tim to be "safe." She tried to keep Tim from his explorations, yet Tim would "kick and scream his way into going outside." He would not be "held down."

Tim's waste-not, want-not attitude was learned early when his dad was laid off from his railroad work after falling out of a tree and breaking his leg. The recovery time was long, and times got tough for the Harrison family. So, they rented out the upstairs of their family home to help them make ends meet. The kids slept on roll-away beds at night in the living room. Once Art's leg recovered, he was able to return to the railroad. This is when the family learned how to "stretch a dollar." Mother Mary made their clothes. And to the day Tim died, he would get his clothes from thrift stores.



During this time, south St. Louis City was developing into a community where neighborhood families and their kids played together. Since Tim didn't particularly like organized sports, he could be found in Tower Grove Park, investigating anything and bringing home everything! Climbing trees and crawling into crevices was a weekly, if not daily event. Tim wanted to know everything! Always a HUGE animal lover, believing that EVERYTHING had a soul, including slimy and slithery creatures, Tim would bring his "discoveries" of animals, amphibians and reptiles' home with him. This also included spiders, and even a tarantula! Tim taught his sisters about holding snakes, bugs, insects and birds. Sandy and Debi know, "Tim brought the outdoor world inside and created a desire in us to appreciate the outside as well."



Tim shared many of his early outings with grade school friends, brothers Greg and Mike Steinkamp. These two brothers were his buddies and enjoyed the adventurous exploits as much as Tim.

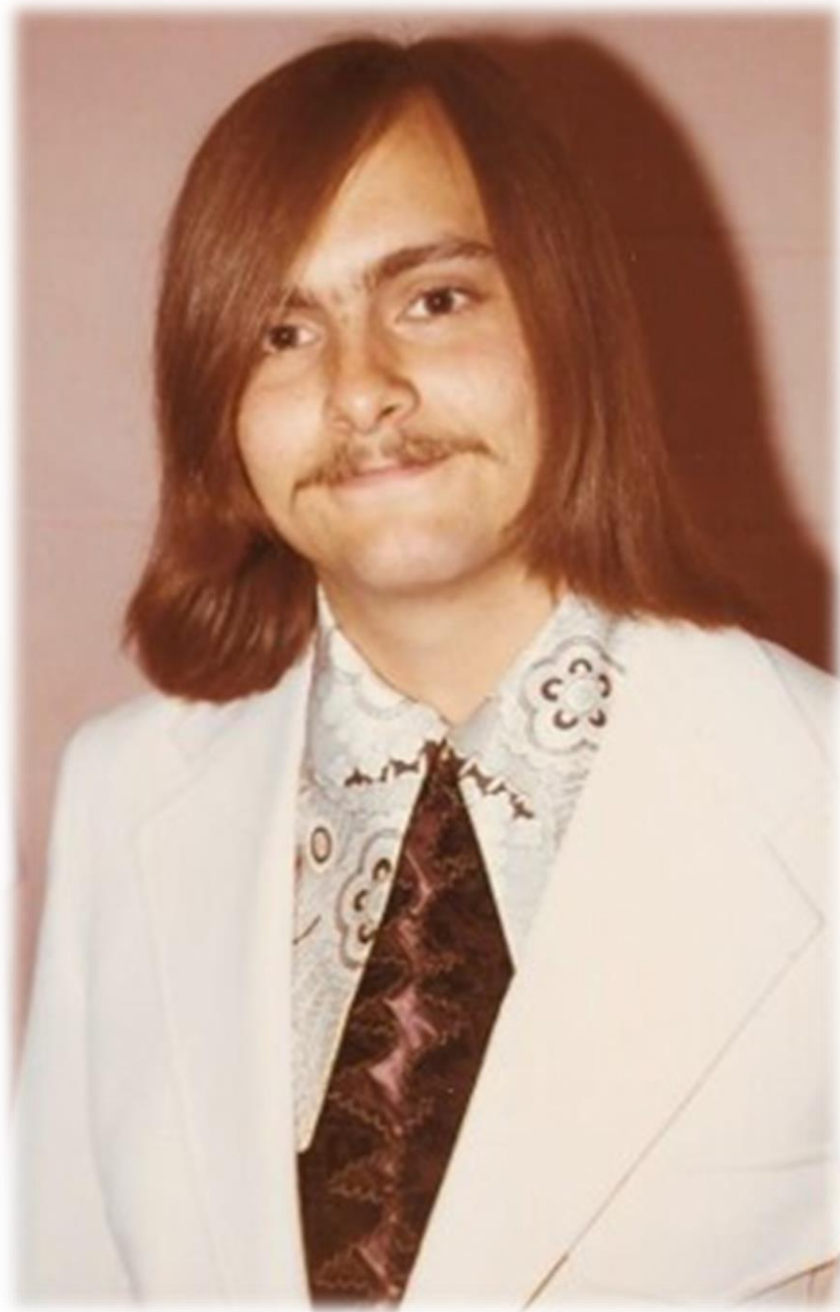
Sister Sandy describes Tim's adventurous side as that of "Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn" as she still believes Tim and his buddies would have made a raft and gone down the Mississippi River – or at least swam across it like Tim's dad Art!!

When Tim was almost 11, his mother Mary developed an illness, which took her away from home for periods of time. This was a pivotal point for Tim – he became even more adventurous, spending more time in nature. It may have been his way of dealing with and escaping the unsteadiness of home life. His sisters believe that Tim's time with nature was his "medicine" for dealing with the stress in his life.

This hardship contributed to Tim's lifelong capacity to love people, no matter where they came from or where they were in life. Tim just seemed to "get people." Knowing that he wanted to be loved, he also learned at this young age that everyone also wanted to be loved.



Tim has been described by his treasured friends and family as “bigger than life.” He viewed his adventures as a learning tool, and he has been an incredible teacher to MANY! In our eyes, he will remain one of the best teachers of nature due to his natural curiosity and wonderment. This wonderment was always seen as positive: Tim’s sisters lament that “trips to the Zoo took longer than most folks as we would have to stop and read each animal’s placard – every visit to the Zoo was a lesson in science and nature.”



As the “big sister,” Sandy reveals that she “did not like my brother until I turned 30.” It was then that their father Art died. After his death, she realized how much Tim matured without their father. Sandy realized that Tim was “going to live his life no matter what” – just like their father. This gave rise to many conversations. Tim and Sandy began to “get on the same level” at this time, a level they carried deeply until Tim’s death in 2020.



“Little sisters” Cindy and Deb idolized Tim throughout their lives. Tim was a protective but playful big brother. When they were young, they wanted to do what he was doing, go with him to the places he was going and have the adventures he was having. Tim taught them about snakes, bugs, insects, birds and more! As Deb recounts, “Tim created a world where all animals were like family members!”

Hiking, fishing and canoeing with Tim was as good as a person could enjoy. He always welcomed the chance to beat his sisters playing scrabble or chess, too. But they will miss discussing the latest book they had read the most.

Heather and Ben: Tim's Children

Tim had two children, Heather Harrison Emerson and Ben Harrison. He adored them! And they thought of their Dad as their Superhero.



Heather shares "My Dad is my hero. It's hard for me to listen to his messages that are saved on my phone. He loved all creatures, big, small and slimy. I love and am dedicated to my Dad. He is my prince."

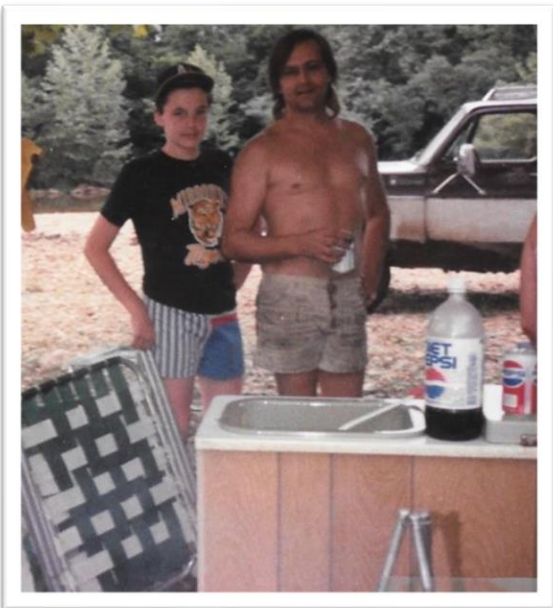


Shortly after Tim's death, his son Ben shared a Facebook post: "How does one summarize a person's life? There is no easy way. There are so many dimensions to each human being, and I didn't even know Tim Harrison before he was 30. Some may try to quantify a life based on success, wealth, or fame. We all know these measurements are foolish. Some may say the true achievement is the number of friends and loved ones who care for you, and this is a better indicator, but not the "end all, be all" assessment. What I can say about my father for sure is that he was an intelligent, adventurous, honest man. Sometimes too honest for some peoples' tastes. He loved his family and friends, and just about all the children he ever met, that is until they became teenagers! But what will he be remembered most for? Maybe legacy is the wrong word because it brings up notions of power and pride. Putting all vanity aside, what will the people who loved him remember of Tim Harrison? I believe his greatest achievement in life was his ability to inspire. He was always willing to try new things, seek adventure, and drag others along with him so he

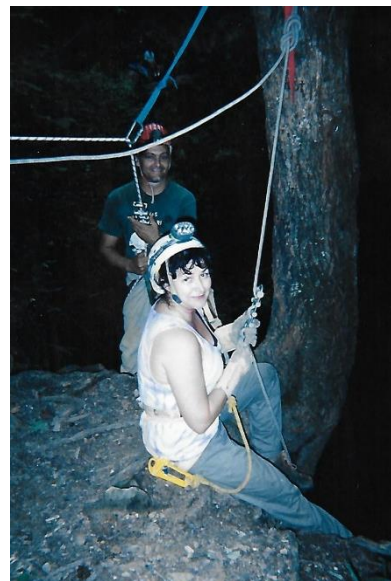
wouldn't be alone. He had an uncanny knack for encouraging people to try things they never thought they would do, or possibly even be scared to death of. Many of his family and friends are outdoor and free-spirited people, who if not for him would have missed out on so many life changing experiences. He had us out there fishing, camping, canoeing, caving, and even rappelling! As I said before, there are innumerable ways to define a life. If his ability to inspire and encourage so many people was his legacy, it was a pretty damn good one. I'm sure my words do little justice to describe his life, so share your stories about Tim Harrison with anyone who will listen, including me. Feel free to share this email with anyone who knew my father.

Love always,

Ben"



As His Wife: Judy Kennedy Harrison



Judy and Tim met at Venice Café on April 24, 1993. Judy was in Tim's chair, unbeknownst to her. He stared at her for a very long time. Judy exchanged the stare. It was love at first sight. He finally sat down to talk with her.

And the rest, as they say, is history.



Judy's two daughters Kaylah and Gretchen were 14 and 6 at the time they met. Judy's daughters loved Tim like their own father. And he took care of them and taught them, in the way Tim has always taught.



Judy said in her Facebook post shortly after Tim's death: "Words are not much to convey the legacy this man brought to our world. The childlike wonder of pure existence never escaped him. I'm blessed that I was his wife and adventure never took the back burner. You will be missed my love, but never forgotten."

I literally would follow him anywhere.❤️"



During recent conversations with Judy, she has also said: "How lucky I am that this amazing human was my husband and I was lucky to have been his wife. Our love and devotion were so precious, and I miss him so."



Tim's Stepchildren: Kaylah and Gretchen



Tim's oldest stepdaughter Kaylah shared a very explicit "stand out" memory of her stepdad that she didn't even want to admit to any of her peers when she was growing up: "As a teenager, I was super embarrassed about being around parents and step-parents YET not Tim. I invited Tim to come to my high school biology class to talk about his Lechuguilla trip. He brought his slide show, caving gear and climbing gear. For a teenager, this was very exciting. Tim was so cool, and I was so proud of him. I was not embarrassed at all."

Tim, a born educator. Most of us reading this know this is true.

Kaylah talks about all the "cool people Tim brought into our lives – engaging people."

Tim introduced Kaylah to camping, sleeping under the stars, caving and dancing in the house. YAY! So much for all of them!

Many know that Tim had a love affair with his dog, Speck. What many don't know is that Speck was Kaylah's dog when she was nine years old. As soon as Speck met Tim, when Kaylah was 14, Speck became Tim's dog. And the rest is history.



Kaylah recounts a particular Blair Creek story that exemplifies Tim's demeanor: "Some people showed up on their four-wheelers and were kicking up dust, going in and out of the holes and stuff as we were trying to eat. This went on for some time. Being the 'peacekeeper,' Tim, while eating a hot dog, calmly and casually walked over and got a big, thorny branch and put it in the hole the four-wheelers kept going in and out of for their entertainment." Done . . . with no conflict. Tim's everlasting style.

Kaylah says that Tim was a “super cool stepdad. He would not reprimand or discipline me. That was left to my Mom. Tim was really good at listening and providing advice when I asked him.”

Entering into adolescence, the family took a trip to Wyoming. It was Judy, Tim, Kaylah and her boyfriend Matt, Gretchen and her friend, and, of course, Speck. They took Grandma’s van and towed a camper. Kaylah says “It was an awesome trip to the Bighorn Mountains. We went on a hike to Lost Twin Lakes – it was Tim’s idea. It was a very cool place to be. Tim always knew where the coolest places were located.”

Gretchen, Tim’s youngest stepdaughter, also shared memories of her incredible stepdad: “I was lucky enough to have Tim come into my life when I was a child, because Tim was a big kid at heart! He taught me and took me on my first camping, floating, and caving trips. And, of course, I have to mention Tim getting me to rappel off the house no matter how much I said I wasn’t going to do it!! YIKES! And he made sure I did it again and again. He taught me to respect nature, to love it, and I do! What better gift is there than the gift of seeing nature for the beauty it holds? I don’t know if I ever would have learned to love and enjoy nature as much as I do now, without Tim. But I did learn to do so. I will never forget the biggest rules in camping, **have fun, celebrate with the people you’re with, and always make sure you leave your campsite cleaner than you found it.**”



Tim's adoring younger sister Deb Harrison met and married the love of her life, Tom Pratt. Deb and Tom got married in 1977. Within two months of their wedding day, Tim had his new brother-in-law in a cave in High Ridge, MO. Tom's recollection is that they were "in there quite a while!" Tim and Tom formed a deep, inseparable and rewarding relationship. This relationship included many adventures, trips, life discussions, lots of beer on the back porch, and maybe, just maybe, some whiskey!



A favorite memory Tom has of one of his many adventures with Tim was in two caves that connected, Bruce Cave and Ash Cave, in Phelps County, MO. This 18-hour cave trip, where they had "no provisions," deepened their bond.



Tommy Pratt Family: Toshia, Salin, Tyeisha and T3 (Tommy the 3rd!)

When the writing of this Eulogy began, we were still experiencing the Great Pandemic of 2020. The use of Zoom technology made it possible to gather the stories in this manuscript.

Nephew Tommy Pratt enters the Zoom Room wearing his Uncle Tim's favorite coat – a blue parka with MICHIGAN proudly displayed on the back. Turns out that in 1990 Tim had commented on how much he liked this coat, which was Tommy's at the time. The next thing you know – the coat is now Tim's! And 20 years later, this coat remains in great condition – which is pure irony as Tommy says, "since Uncle Tim could wear the same pair of pants for five days."

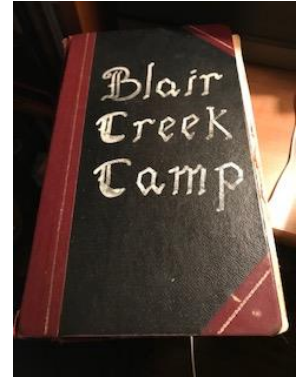
Laughter abounds as the Pratt family recounts Uncle Tim's favorite clothing and sense of fashion. This family did learn that Tim and his sisters grew up knowing how to stretch a dollar. And while Tim's great niece Salin believes her great uncle Tim has been "unfashionable," Tim had a remarkable way of finding some of the most unusual clothing.



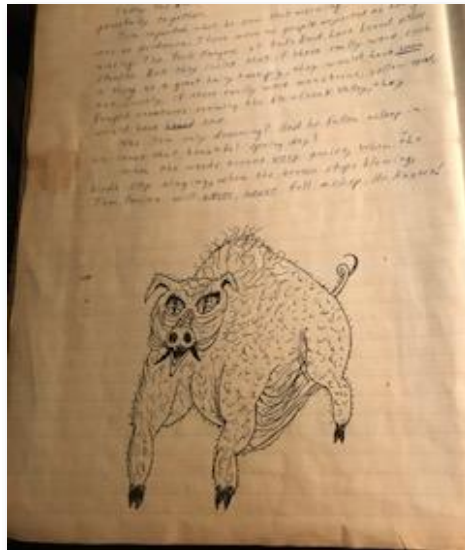
Even though Salin questions her great uncle's fashion, we could always count on the "Custom Designs by Tim." If Tim wanted something specific for an adventure, he would make it. He definitely wasn't going to the store to buy it since most retailers didn't make exactly what he wanted. So, Tim would make his "Custom Design" for his specifications only. He was an inventor.

Blair Creek has been the annual Memorial Day weekend trip tradition for over 38 years for the Harrison Family. While it was a weekend for the family, this could be a week-long trip for Tim! From hot tubs and saunas, to hiking and fishing, to cooking and camaraderie, to caving and more caving, and to stories around the campfires, and more campfire stories, this place and this time has immense significance to every member of this Harrison-Pratt Family.

One favorite Blair Creek memory of Tim's great nieces Salin and Tyeisha is that of the "magic stick." Tim would convince all the kids to participate in a scavenger hunt to collect a variety of things, including different flowers, sticks, creek water, etc. As the kids buried these items, they were required to do a special chant. It was this chanting that caused the "magic stick" to *POOF*, suddenly appear! It was magic!! And not only would the magic stick suddenly appear, it would also cause campfires to change colors!



Tim was gifted at storytelling and over the years at Blair Creek, he convinced the kids that the "Hairy Tree Pig" is real!!



Tommy recounts a special time at one of Uncle Tim's favorite places, Logger's Lake in Bunker, MO. Tim took his nephews and his son Ben for a camping and fishing weekend. Shortly after setting up the pop-up camper, Tim held up a 10 lb. bag of potatoes, some onions and a package of Oreo cookies, saying to the boys "Now if you want something to go with these potatoes and onions, it's out in that water. So, if you boys want to eat, you better get out there and get to work." Tommy continues sharing: "If I wanted a cookie, I had to complete a game to get the cookie. It was always an adventure, with a catch."



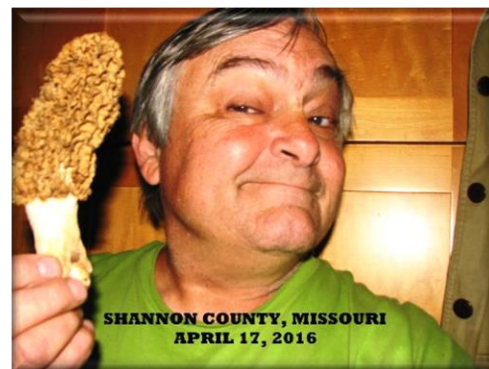
As Tim's nephews got older and began having their own adventures, they shared their fishing experiences at the Confluence, and the size of the catfish they were catching, with him. Not to be outdone by his nephews, Tim just had to check this out! Once he got interested in something, Tim was going to find out everything there is to know about it. This was the beginning of the "Duck Camp."



The Harrison family shared many special adventures and moments with their Uncle Tim. Collectively they shared that Tim was super smart and always had something nice to say – even if he was talking them into doing something! Tommy conveyed what he loves the most about his Uncle Tim: "He was always looking for someone to go with him to a place he found on his maps: a fishing hole, a lake, a cave, a river . . . he'd throw a trip together in the blink of an eye and we'd be gone."



Uncle Tim introduced another nephew Nate Pratt to Shannon County, MO – a place where you can “spend a day or a lifetime.” They did many things together as Tim taught Nate about fishing, caving, hiking, hunting mushrooms and exploring new territory. This also included many late-night conversations and possibly getting a little drunk! Nate reveals that “Tim was always excited when I got excited about what he taught me.” With Uncle Tim’s expert teaching, Nate took many solo trips with his dog, Stimpy. The first stop Nate would make on his way back home would be to Uncle Tim’s to share his findings.



Nate’s wife Christina was warmly welcomed into the family. Tim would involve her in all the adventures he presented to his nephews – even though she had never camped before. She was in for a real treat when she went fishing with Nate, Tim and her father-in-law, Tom – just the four of them on the island at Columbia Bottoms. She recalls a huge storm, with gale force tornado winds, that forced the foursome to hunker down for the night. In true form, Tim’s incredible story telling ability got them through the night. Tim enthralled his listeners with his tales.

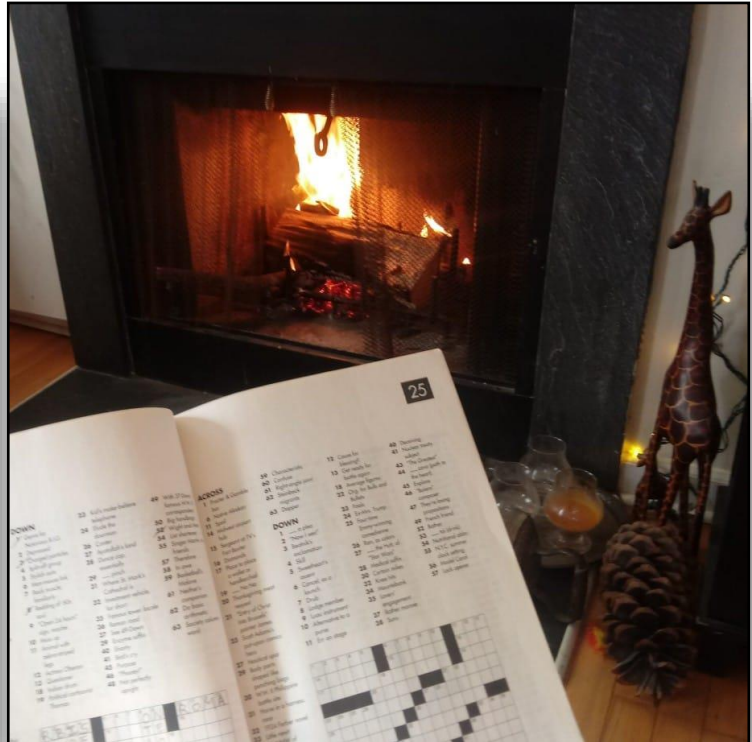
A fond memory of nephew Mike Pratt, who at 14 years old, had never had a job before. Uncle Tim asked him if he wanted to work alongside him in the landscaping business. Of course, Mike said YES! What an opportunity to work with his uncle! After about an hour into the leaf removal job, Mike's Uncle Tim stopped him from raking and had a heart to heart talk with him, "I see you're moving the rake over here, but do you see that window up there? That's Mr. Win's house. And when Mr. Win looks out that window, all he wants to see are asses and elbows." That really set the spark for a long and impactful work relationship from that point forward.

Mike and Tim shared the special bond of humor, saying that "most of the humor throughout the day was really puns that arrived from anything we did or could talk about. One of my favorites, and I'm pretty sure it was one of his, as he said it most often was, 'I never met a woman that makes me feel like a yew do.'"

Mike continued learning much from Uncle Tim every summer, until the time of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Tim left Mike his landscaping business and travelled to New Orleans and learned to do insurance adjusting for the lives impacted by Katrina. Tim spent almost six months in New Orleans doing this work. Tim lived with a fellow caver, Susie Emerson, during this time.

Mike and his Uncle Tim created a bond around business, work ethic, their life-changing discussions and memorable adventures, especially the Boundary Waters trip. Mike knows he wouldn't have done some of these things in his life, on his own, had it not been for his Uncle Tim's invitations. Mike grew his confidence. They learned from each other -- Mike brought his youthfulness to Uncle Tim and Tim brought his wisdom to nephew Mike . . . and unique sense of humor into their relationship.

Mike remarked how much Tim loved the freedom of being self-employed, so that when he awoke, he could dictate when and how often and what he would do – of course, this was all predicated upon his morning routine of coffee and doing a crossword puzzle BEFORE leaving the house.

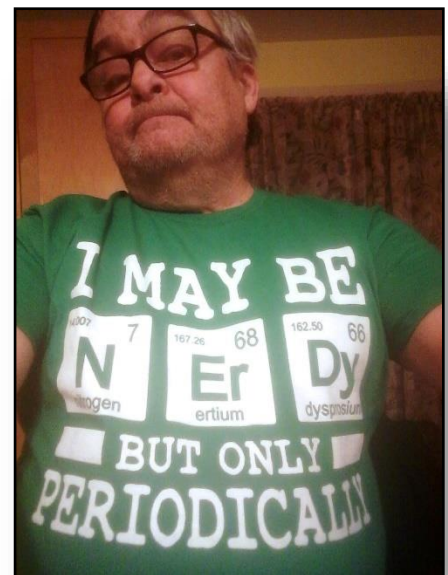


Mike's fondest and most cherished memories of Tim are of his mannerisms, his humor and his view of life – "If you're not going to be very good for work on a given day, go floating!" Uncle Tim had the middle-class dream of working hard within the main scope of life – LIVING.

Earning a Living

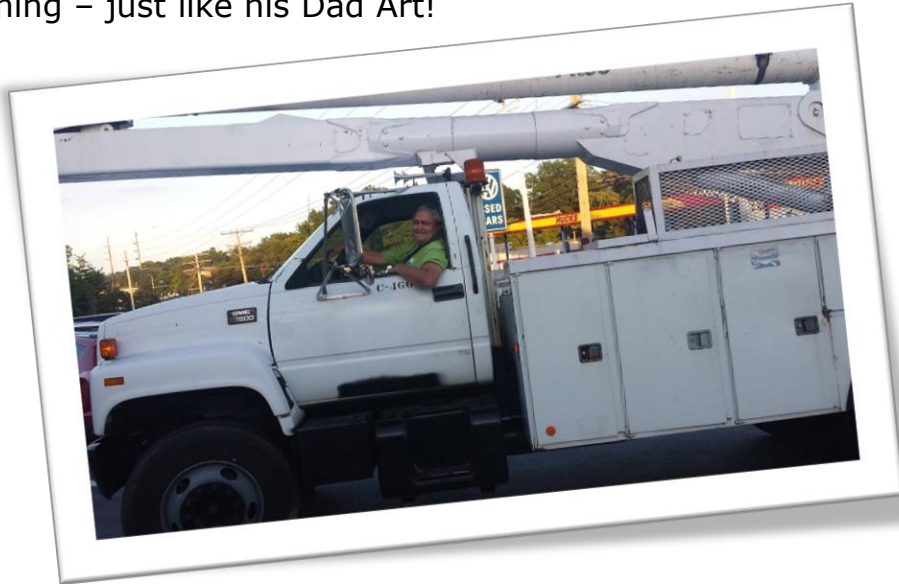
Tim had many occupations over the years as a mail carrier, dog catcher and some role for the city of St. Louis. His corporate job was at PetroChemical Company. Many do not know that Tim was a chemist, who worked in a lab. He knew this wasn't the life for him. And hence he knew "I'm going to retire at 40 and go live my life." And that's exactly what he did. That was 1990. GGGGGOOOOO Tim!!!!

During his retirement, Tim created a landscaping business, which of course was perfect for him since he knew horticulture. Eventually he turned this landscaping business over to his nephew, Mike, in 2005 when he decided to travel to New Orleans, Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina, to learn insurance adjusting for the lives impacted by Katrina. Tim



spent almost six months in New Orleans doing this work. Tim lived with a fellow caver, Susie Emerson, during this time.

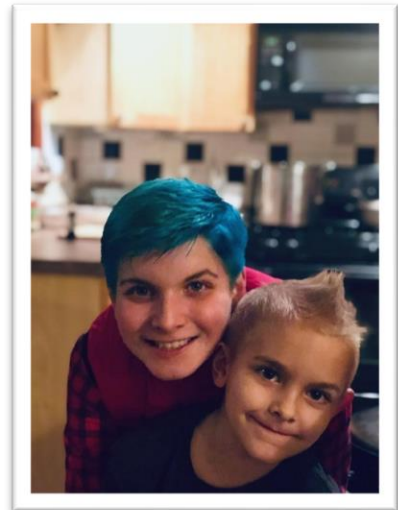
During some of this time period, Tim used to live at Brian Borton's house. Tom Panian was a fixture at the house. They worked periodically, they called it CIGA – Casual Income Generating Activity. Tim was doing landscaping and tree trimming – just like his Dad Art!



Grandchildren



Tim was an awesome "Pap." Being a natural born teacher, he was great with instruction and engagement. He would play to his grandkids sense of wonder. Tim would always encourage them by teaching them about nature.



Later Years with Siblings

In the last three years of Tim's life, he and sister Sandy got very close. When Sandy's husband of 52 years Charlie passed, Tim became her protector and dear friend. They talked about everything, including politics, religion and life.

What truly amazed Sandy the very most, was how they arrived at the same place on this road of life. Sandy says, "It seemed we have taken such different journeys, but could connect, understand and respect one another totally. I will miss our talks most of all."

Deb's later years with Tim centered around camping, hiking, and watching each other's family's bond. Tim was the uncle that provided all the adventure that Deb's three sons could ask for. He even became the outdoor mentor for Deb's grandkids (and any other kids that came along on family adventures). It's those memories and stories that will live on around campfires for generations to come.

Tim's Final Facebook Posts:

December 17, 2020

Another loaf of Sourdough Bread. Crusty & chewy, it makes the house smell good too.



December 19, 2020

I don't have anything against winter....when the sun is shining. This is Bryan Island in the lower Missouri River February 2013. Pretty, but you still have to wonder why the birds all headed South. Better tacos?



Sister Debi on Facebook after Tim's Death:

"While words cannot express the profound sadness of losing my brother Tim, they also can't convey the awesome privilege of having had him in my life. I know my brother and I had a unique relationship but I'm guessing almost anyone who knew him could probably say the same. He lived life with boundless passion and never let the simplest of things go unnoticed. I'll miss our conversations and adventures, but mostly just that little smile that told me how much he cared. Thank you for sharing yourself, your family, your friends, and all of those unforgettable moments with me and mine. I'll look forward to our journey on the other side. RIP my dear brother."



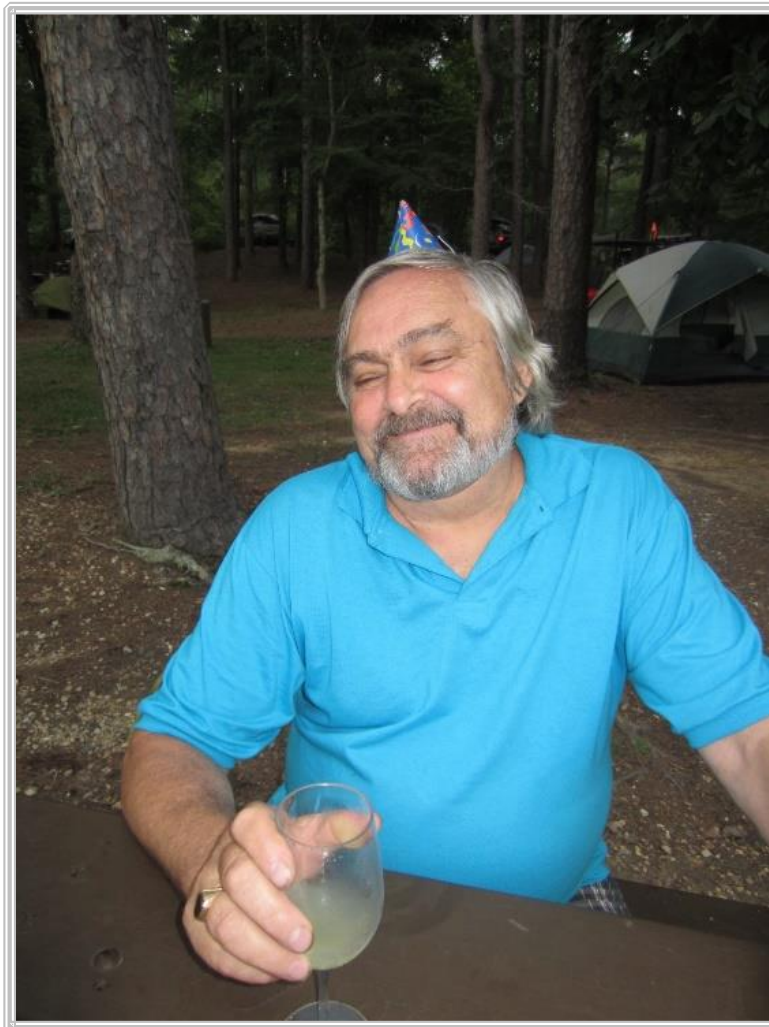
Chronicles from Tim's Fellow Cavers

While many words can be used to describe Tim, those spoken most often are adventuresome, curious, frugal, focused, driven, warm, thoughtful, kind, caring, generous, outgoing, intelligent, reliable, always in a good mood, an inventor and a good friend. On every adventure and encounter with Tim, these characteristics would shine!



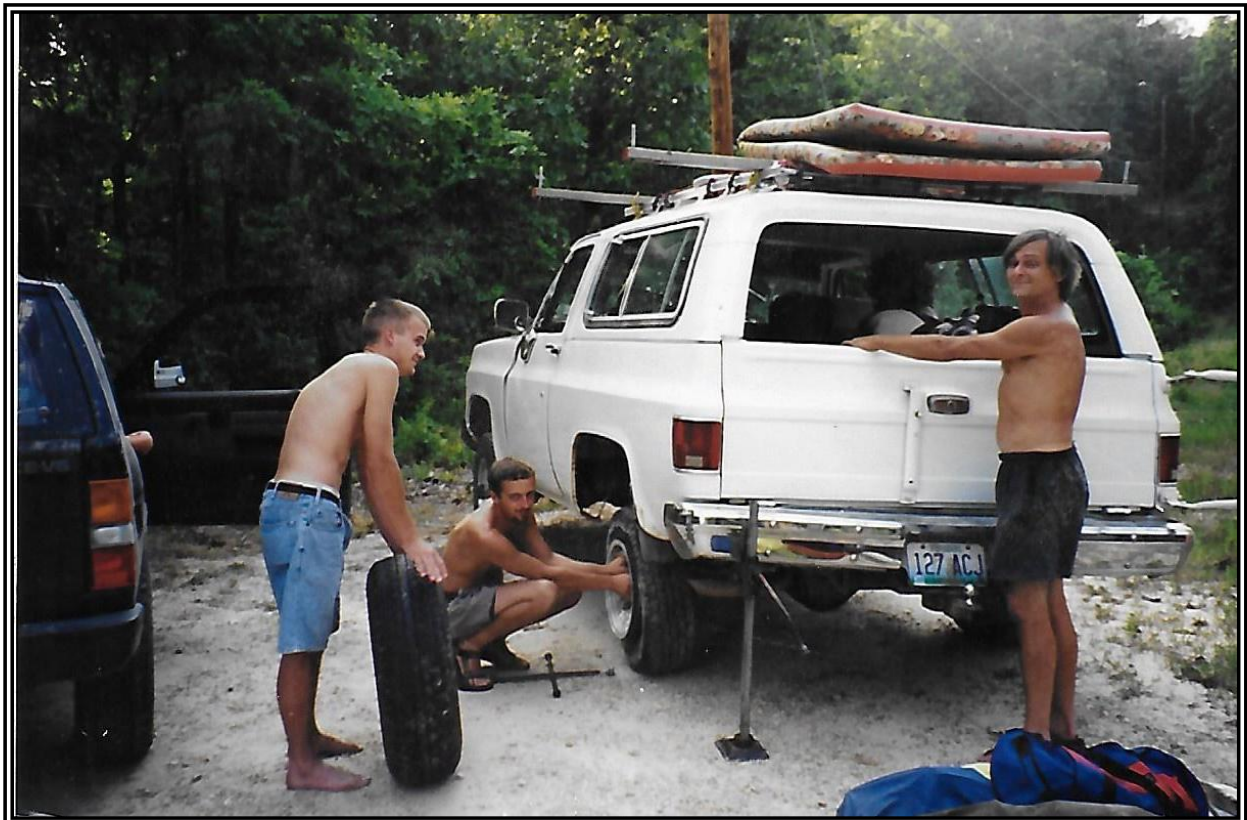
Tim was driven to explore. He wasn't afraid to tackle anything – including the mechanics of a vehicle. An easygoing, gentle and fun-loving man, Tim had a genuine concern for others. He was considerate, patient and introspective. Mitch Wieldt shares: "Tim could stay mellow longer than most . . . but then look out if you were a deserving fool! He could become quite irascible if he felt that he, or a friend, had been unnecessarily wronged in some way."

Tim was full of life, always listening and always caring about what was going on with us personally. Korey Hart commented: "While he cared, he was also ready to give anyone shit and have a great belly laugh. There is no doubt that Tim was genuine. He was definitely a "one-of-a-kind" human being, who marched to the beat of his own drum. He found humor in all situations, even grim ones."



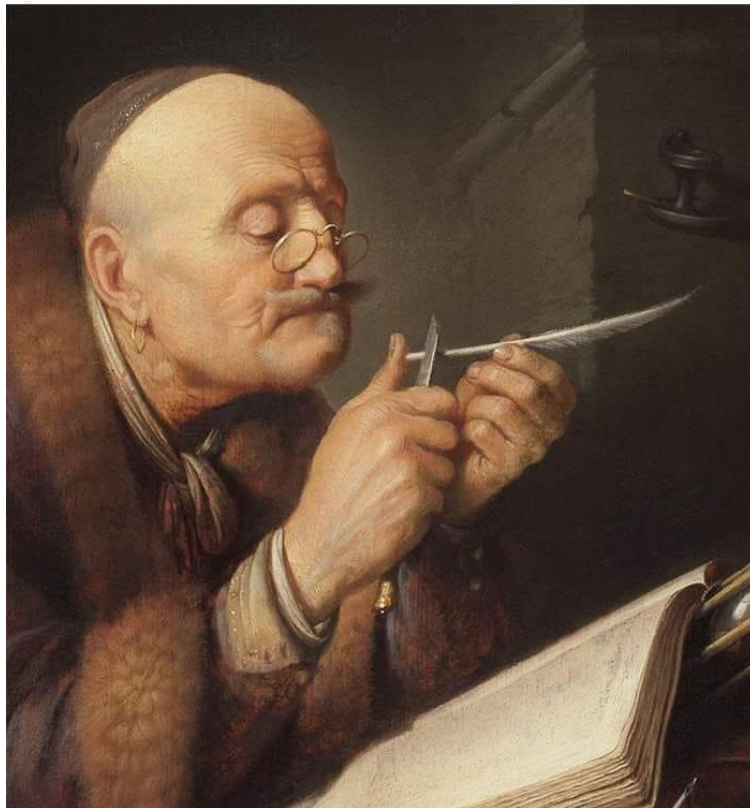
What we loved the most about our beloved Tim, is his amicable disposition and his acceptance of everyone. He was truly a good human being in the most basic sense. When you were with him you had his attention. He was always happy to share knowledge, time and an ear. We always knew we could stop in at the house – and some of us are living with the regret of not doing so more often.

Over the years, Tim became an outdoors skills and caving mentor to many people, young and old alike. Some of these people were new members of the Meramec Valley Grotto (MVG), others were his family members and his friends' children. If somebody, no matter their age or gender, wanted to do something, or learn about something in the great outdoors, Tim was up for taking them on the adventure. Korey Hart shares a fond memory of Tim's "mentoring:" "As crusty as Tim was, seemingly rough on the surface, he'd always take time. He was welcoming and encouraging and even would go on trips. He'd offer or give assistance when needed, always with a sense of humor, and willingly gave shit to us. You can't forget that grin... 'bet you can't go there' I recall him saying, egging me on with a grin. Only to be there with a smile and helpful hand when things broke."



Upon learning of Tim's death, one of his "mentees" – Conor Panian, the son of one of Tim's dearest friends, Tom Panian, said in a Facebook post, "I found out that a large chunk of my childhood had died in his sleep due to Covid-19. We are talking about a man who embodied 'never stop learning, always be amazed at the world around you, to look around with the wonder of a child.' He taught me many things, and between him and my father/mother (along with others) set the foundations of who I am today, the things that I enjoy doing, and my major interest in reptiles / amphibians. He is one the reasons I know so much about the animals / reptiles / amphibians of MO. He was instrumental in helping me to raise myself, as well as many other children I grew up with - camping, caving, hiking, floating, fishing and oh so many other things of our collective childhood. *He was a jack of all trades, and unlike some who are, he was a master of many.*

When someone starts an argument with
me about something I know a lot about



I will never forget the scary stories around a fire while camping, I will never forget his singing on the gravel bars in the morning while waking up, I will never forget the funny snoring noises you would hear when he was asleep coming from his K-5 Blazer that had enough miles on it to go around the world multiple times... I will never forget the man who was so very important, not just for me but many others, in building who we are and how we view the world today."

GOLD BAR RIM TRAIL, UTAH



Tim was a phenomenal herpetologist. He would grab all sorts of large poisonous snakes that most wouldn't even want to be near. However, Tim hated spiders with a passion. Mitch Wieldt recounts "Every so often, a good size spider would drop from the overgrowth as we drove. We took great delight at flicking spiders towards him. A practical joke for sure, and Tim would call us a-holes, which we were, but it was such fun."



Not only did Time have the gift of gab, as he would say about himself, he had a pen to match. Tim was a spectacular writer, being published in *The Nylon Highway*, the *Shannon County Gazette* and Meramec Valley Grotto's *The Caver*. Tim was a big hit within the caving community due to his regular column, *Uncle Muddy*, in *The Caver*.

Tim was also a talented photographer. He was told on many occasions that his photographs were of National Geographic quality, and asked "Why don't you apply?"

Many cavers would never miss a party or MVG meeting where Tim was having a slide show. Tim and his slides were always the highlight. Phenomenal photography! He experimented often with his shots and his approach to photography, including creating a cardboard box of lights that could illuminate caverns and capture their essence. His photography has inspired us and will continue to do so.

Meramec Valley Grotto, St. Louis, MO



An active member in the Meramec Valley Grotto (MVG) caving club and holding many Board positions over the years, Tim would share his interests, exploration and adventures with all! Routinely he would invite prospective members and new members on a grand trip! Many of our favorite memories with Tim involve some form of "adventure." It was ordinary when Mike Bennett found him driving around the logging roads in a 4-door Buick Sedan with a bad starter, or others would see him in his Betty Boop Chevrolet Blazer, following a cave lead.

Lois Bronnert Walsh, a long-time member of the Meramec Valley Grotto, along with her beloved, deceased husband Joe Walsh shared a typed letter of MY FAVORITE MEMORY OF TIM HARRISON:

MY FAVORITE MEMORY OF TIM HARRISON

I met Tim at the 1984 Spring MVOR hosted by MVG, held at Camp Lion's Den, and at which I was chairperson. Tim joined MVG, and became a very active caver, trip leader, and later MVG President.

Somewhere I learned Tim was an admirer of Red Watson. Sometime in the mid 1980's, I saw in the Post-Dispatch that Red was hosting a poetry reading at Duff's in the CWE. The speaker was an author and poet, and had written about Lascaux, a cave with prehistoric paintings in the southwest of France. So I called Tim and Joe Walsh (it was before we were married), and we met at Duff's.

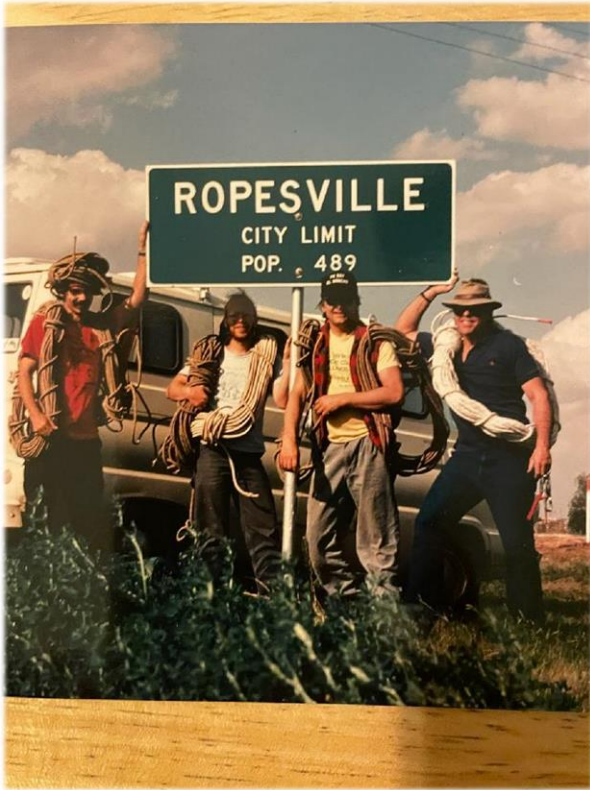
The speaker's plane was weathered-delayed, so Red "entertained" us - unfortunately not with caving stories of Mammoth Cave but with remarks and his poetry about tightrope walkers, another one of his interests.

Finally, the speaker arrived and showed slides of Lascaux Cave. His theory was that the cave formations/shadows did not just inspire the prehistoric men's visualizations to paint images on the walls, but also inspired literary thoughts (cave men poems?). He droned on for quite awhile. Several people left, but we were "trapped" at the back. Anyway, he read several of his poems with one based on mammillary formations. So of course, the poem had sexual suggestions. Tim, Joe, and I looked at each other, rolled our eyes, and promptly got the giggles. I'm sure you can picture me getting the giggles, even Tim, but THE Joe Walsh getting the giggles.

Finally, the program was over. Talk about weird even by caver standards. But Tim was happy; he got Red Watson's autograph in Red's book "Under Plowman's Floor."

Lois Bronnert Walsh

Trip Log



Tim went on, LITERALLY, hundreds of trips over the course of his life. From a young age, he became an adventurer and we've always known him to be an explorer! He kept journals of every trip he took. Many of these trips are talked about in these journals – don't worry everybody, these journals are in safe and understanding hands!!



If you were on a road trip with Tim, no doubt you encountered his belief of and stated fact that "flat meat and tube steak are standard road food" (bologna and hot dogs). YIKES!

Mexico and a Tale of El Abra (with Brian Borton, Mike Bennett, Mitch Wieldt and Ray Mallinkrodt)

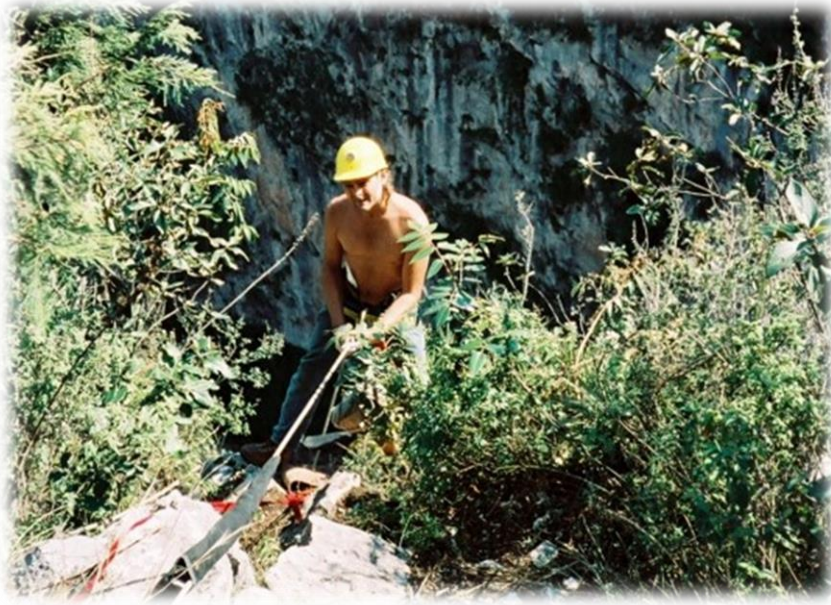


Tim travelled extensively for years in Mexico, searching for caves and, of course, creating and experiencing other shenanigans!

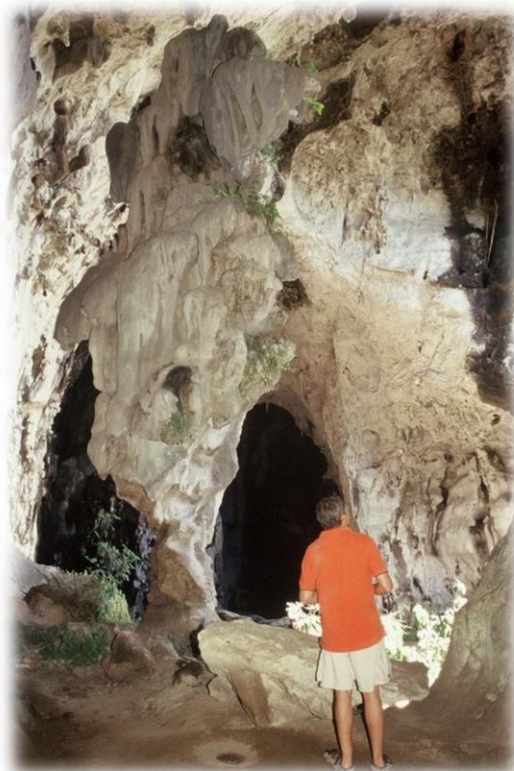


Mexico is known for its karst and large, deep and vast caverns. Some of Tim's trips included Monte, GuasGuas, Golondrinas and El Abra. These areas of Mexico are SPECTACULAR to see and even more impactful when rappelling into them.





Brian Borton shares a story of the early 1990s. Sitting under a palapa in Monte, as everyone was waking up, someone said "Life is strange and full of stuff. Don't know why, can't get enough." This defined the era of life for Tim and his travelling companions.



The trip to El Abra in the early 1990s was especially notable. Given Tim's writing capabilities, his written escapades on hacking through the jungles of Mexico looking for vast caverns inspired Mitch Wieldt. He felt honored to meet up with Tim's group (Brian Borton, Mike Bennett and Ray Mallinkrodt) at La Cascada de Micos, preparing to search for Questa.



As Mitch Wieldt and Mike Bennett share this story of Tim and their travelling companions: "We headed out to the two-canopy rain forest that held the deep caverns. Tim had acquired the proper written permission to pass, or so he thought. Once we turned off the main highway (not far from Ciudad Valles), we encountered the local authorities of the town of El Abra, who said we needed further authorization. Most likely this was a shakedown, but Tim wasn't going to give in. Instead, we drove a few miles further up the main road, where Tim created a more formal letter. Mitch was impressed that his Spanish was good enough and that he could forge a document in that language. When they returned to El Abra, some of the town authorities were no longer there, so Tim handed his document to one of the unsuspecting few who remained, and they wasted no time driving down the dirt road that was

once used for an onyx mine. It was almost 10 miles of slow driving in Brian's truck before the vegetation was noticeably thicker. At that point, Tim climbed up on the front bumper. Mike and Mitch hung on the rear bumper, while Brian drove and Ray rode shotgun. The three of them on the outside of the vehicle had machetes that they used to hack on the vegetation that impeded their journey. The shiny blades glistened in the afternoon sun.

On the drive out of the jungle, Brian did not see a large Blue Boa Constrictor stretched across the road, and he drove over it. Mike and Mitch knew something had occurred as they were sitting on the rear tail gate and felt the rear tires lift and fall, as their feet hit the now dead snake.

Brian stopped, got out his knife and parted the deceased from its skin. Tim then duct taped the snakeskin to the brush guard on the front bumper of Brian's truck to dry it out. It was a unique wrap, which was greatly admired the next day at the Corona beer exchange depot. As Mike Bennett vividly recalls, "At the border crossing, Tim stuffed the carefully folded snakeskin down his pants to get it through customs!" AH, Tim!!



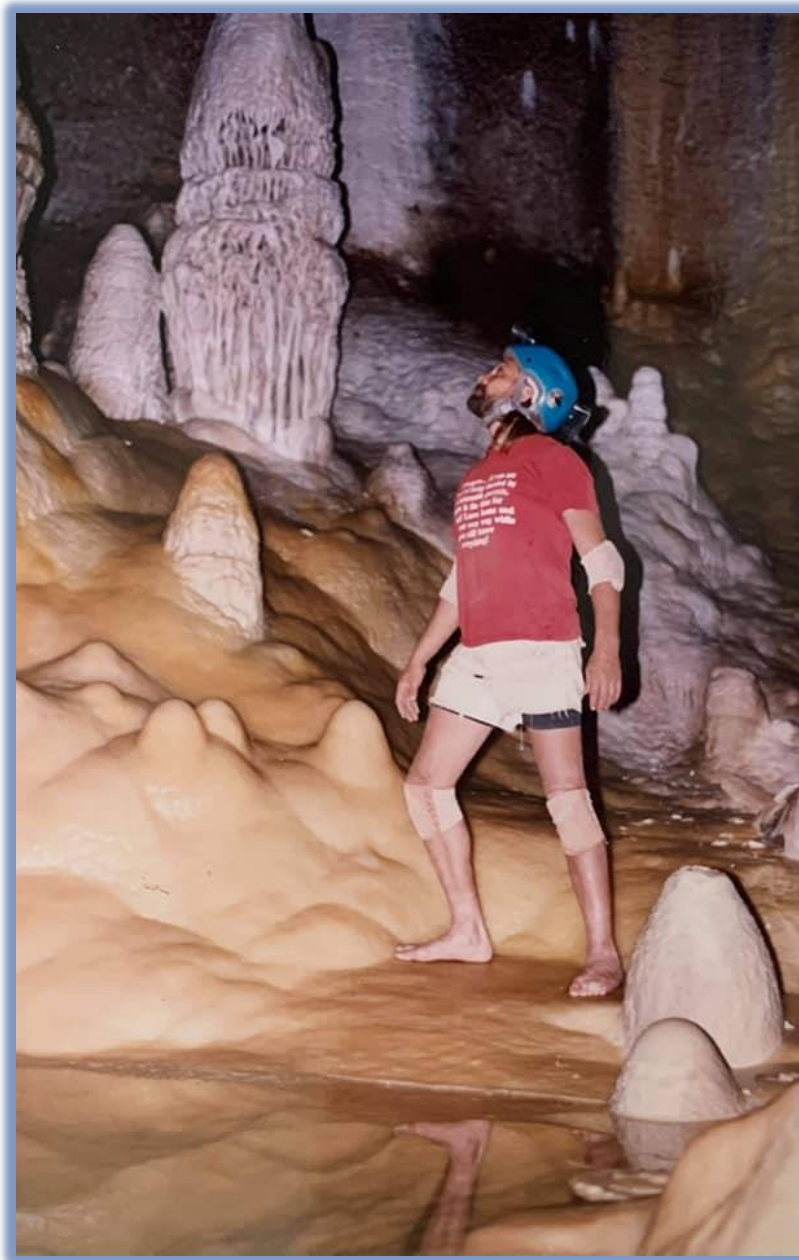
Lechuguilla Cave, Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico

Lechuguilla Cave was known until 1986 as a small, insignificant historic site in Carlsbad Caverns National Park's back country. Small amounts of bat guano were mined from the entrance passages under a mining claim filed in 1914. The historic cave contained a 90-foot entrance pit known as Misery Hole, which led to 400 feet of dry, dead-end passages. Or so they thought.



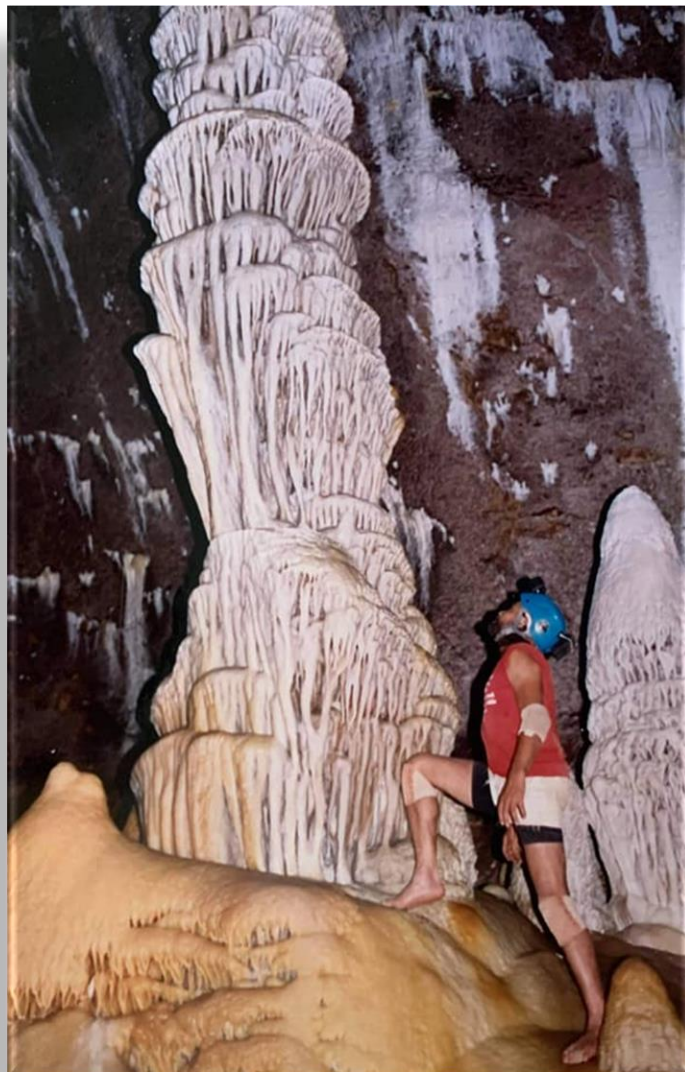
The cave was visited infrequently after mining activities ceased. However, in the 1950s, cavers heard wind roaring up from the rubble-choked cave floor. Although no route was obvious, people concluded that cave passages lay below the rubble. In 1984 a group of cavers from the Colorado Grotto gained permission from the National Park Service and began digging. The 1986 breakthrough into large walking passages provided Tim with his next big adventure!

For a caver to participate in Lechuguilla's exploration, they had to "apply," citing their caving credentials. And, of course, if accepted, the caver had to get off work and pay their own way for the duration of the expedition. At this time, Tim was working at the chemical company. He wrote a letter to his boss about the significance of Lechuguilla's exploration and discovery. Tim was given the time off to explore, map and photograph Lechuguilla's passages and geology.



Brian Borton has a vivid memory of Tim's first trip into Lechuguilla. He watched Tim pack three days of ham sandwiches into one small Tupperware container. Cave packs have limited space!

Matt Marciano recalls the "best cave trips ever in Lech" was with Digger and Tim. They ended up on the same survey team – YAY! And they had "carte blanche" through the cave. They saw some really awesome places and photographed as many of them as possible.



On Tim's first trip to Lechuguilla, which was also Doug "Digger's" first trip, they had to rescue Emily Davis' (owner of Speleobooks) from the FUBAR passage – Tim got his picture in Smithsonian magazine for this rescue. It was a successful rescue, with Emily suffering only a broken leg.

Due to this trip, Tim got Digger elected as the Regional Spokesperson, representing the midwest USA. Way to go Tim and Digger!



Tongas National Forest, Alaska with Doug "Digger" Feakes:

In 1996, Tim and Digger planned a three-week trip for a surveying project for the Tongas National Forest. Digger saw this advertised in the NSS News. Soviet cavers were on this trip and MVG sponsored one of these cavers. They got a free ride there and back by Digger having a friend who wanted his van to be in Seattle, yet didn't want to drive there. As Digger recounts, "It was wet, cold and everything was vertical." Digger got his fill of Alaska caving, and so did Tim.



Caving Project Weekends – In many states!



Tim planned and participated in a multitude of caving projects for many years. The goal of most caving projects was to find caves, then explore, survey and map them over a period of time. Each project weekend would have some of the same crew, weekend after weekend. Korey Hart talks about “sitting around the many campfires along the Blair and Big Creeks on our project weekends. Tim’s banter with all of us. The way he would egg me on to go four-wheeling and providing subsequent support for repairs. I feel so fortunate to have gotten to adventure with him.”

Tales of Float Trips and Fishing Trips



Tim loved fishing! An accomplished canoeist, he also loved floating rivers – at any time of day . . . or night. He especially loved his regular “full moon floats.”





On a particular Current River trip with Matt and Jill Marciano's family and Tim's children Heather and Ben, they were almost ready to eat dinner, and Tim said, "I'll be right back." He went down the riverbank, got a piece of bamboo and hardened it in the fire while they were eating dinner. Tim wanted to ensure the group was ready to go gigging after dinner. And that's just what they did.

Tim was always ready for a float trip! You could call him and ask him what he was doing and if he wanted to get on the water. Typically, his response would be a resounding YES!



Jo Schaper reveals a story of a long time ago: "While on a rope swing, Tim broke his heel and foot bones against a bluff on the Jacks Fork River. He was told he would never walk again. Being Tim, he said, 'The hell with that.' After a fairly long convalescence, not only did he walk, he hiked, and canoed and caved. He wrote a short piece for the MVG Caver. 'Ya gotta wanna. You can do *anything* you wanna, if you are willing to try hard enough.'"

Tim will forever belong to a small fraternity of people who have canoed the Meramec River backwards. At night. Often during the week, after grotto meetings.

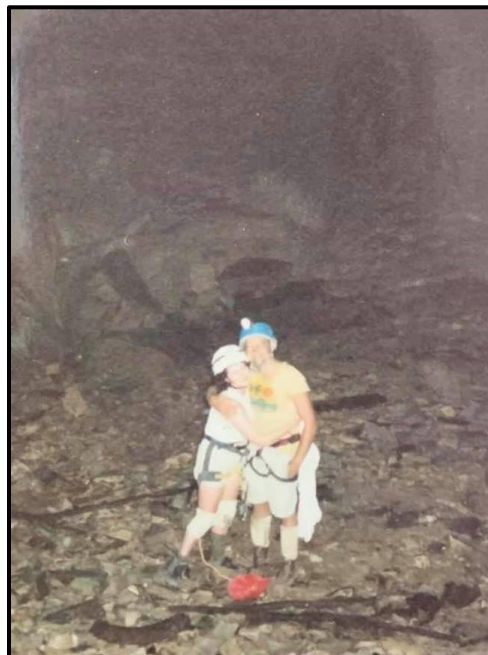
You, Tim, are FUN!

TAG (Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia) Trips

The area of the United States where Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia intersect is affectionately known to cavers as TAG. It is an area loaded with caves, many being pit caves, requiring rope, rappelling and climbing gear.



When Tim began dating Judy, it was time to get her to TAG. It was the summer solstice and Tom Panian, and Matt and Jill Marciano went with them. In true fashion, Tim knew where all the caves were or had maps to find them. They went to Conley Hole - this was Judy's and Jill's first rappel. This was also the weekend that Tom got arrested for urinating on the road in Monteagle, TN.



Boundary Waters – An Annual Event

Tim and his son Ben would paddle the Boundary Waters annually. It was always a very special trip. Sometimes others would be invited to experience this “Call of the Wild.” As Matt Marciano describes these trips, “Typically, we would live off the land, eating the fish we caught and what we would find in the woods. We would do this for the entire seven-day trip.” GO TIM, BEN AND MATT!





Venezuela with Doug "Digger" Feakes

Tim and Digger went on this incredible trip to Venezuela to cave and fish. As Digger recollects, they only did a commercial cave. They ran into a group at the Brazilian border and instead did float trips on the rivers.



Digger recalls that "someone gave Tim a squid for bait and he kept putting it in the food cooler. It became quite a game of back and forth with the squid in and out of the food cooler. Finally Tim said to me 'You're my friend and I'll give you anything.'" And with that, Digger grabbed the squid and tossed it in the bushes. And so ended the squid-in-the-cooler-as-bait in Venezuela.

One-of-a-Kind Escapades & Antics

Tim's Bachelor Party – Dressed in Drag

Before Tim and Judy “tied the marriage knot,” Tim’s closest caving friends decided they would throw this crazy bachelor party for Tim in the woods. It was a surprise party, yet Judy did know about it. She supplied Tim’s “outfit.”



This was Tom Panian’s idea -- no women were allowed. It was a “drag only attire” bachelor party.

"He-Man Women Haters Club Float"

Tim began this one-of-a-kind escapade after a divorce. This was an almost annual winter float trip event that included mostly divorced men. Yet Tim didn't want to exclude his married friends and began including them. Mike Bennett was happy to be included in this event and stayed quiet most of the weekend!

"Scurrilous Monks of the Order of Sister Winkie - The Alternative St. Patrick's Day Parade"

Tim talked Mitch Wieldt into joining him and other "scurrilous monks" to march in the Alternative St. Pat's day parade behind the Hairy-Legged Girl Scouts. Tim indoctrinated Mitch in the teachings of Sister Winkie (an Ozark Deity) at an MVOR. As a student anxious to learn, Mitch hung onto Tim's every word and was brought into contact with the owner and associates of the Venice Cafe. On occasion, these bearded gentlemen would adorn themselves in Girl Scout uniforms for various fundraising activities. They boasted that they had sold more Girl Scout Cookies than any other troop in the St. Louis area. Their application to march in the St. Louis St. Patrick's Day Parade was denied. So, they petitioned to march in the Ancient Order of Hibernians Dogtown Parade. Again, they were told no. So, the Hairy-Legged Girl Scouts decided to host their own. It was called the Alternative St. Patrick's Day Parade. Tim, Brian Borton, Dave DeBold, Tom Panian and Mitch (collectively identified as the Scurrilous Monks of the Order of Sister Winkie) marched proudly on parade day. They were adorned in long drab robes and had ash dabbed on their faces. Someone in the group had inflated a blow-up doll with the impression of The Scream by Edvard Munch on it, which was then attached to a long 2x4 which was hoisted on their shoulders. Tom had wired two metal electrical junction boxes together and put lit incense inside them. This was suspended from a chain that swung back and forth, releasing white plumes of scented smoke. Every so often the Scurrilous Monks would chant in unison, "OORRRROOOO, OORRRREEEEEOO" as they shuffled along. Mitch doesn't think those watching them were quite sure what they were about, but none of them really cared. Mitch says, "I was just happy to be involved with more Harrison buffoonery."

SAMOA Cave Trips

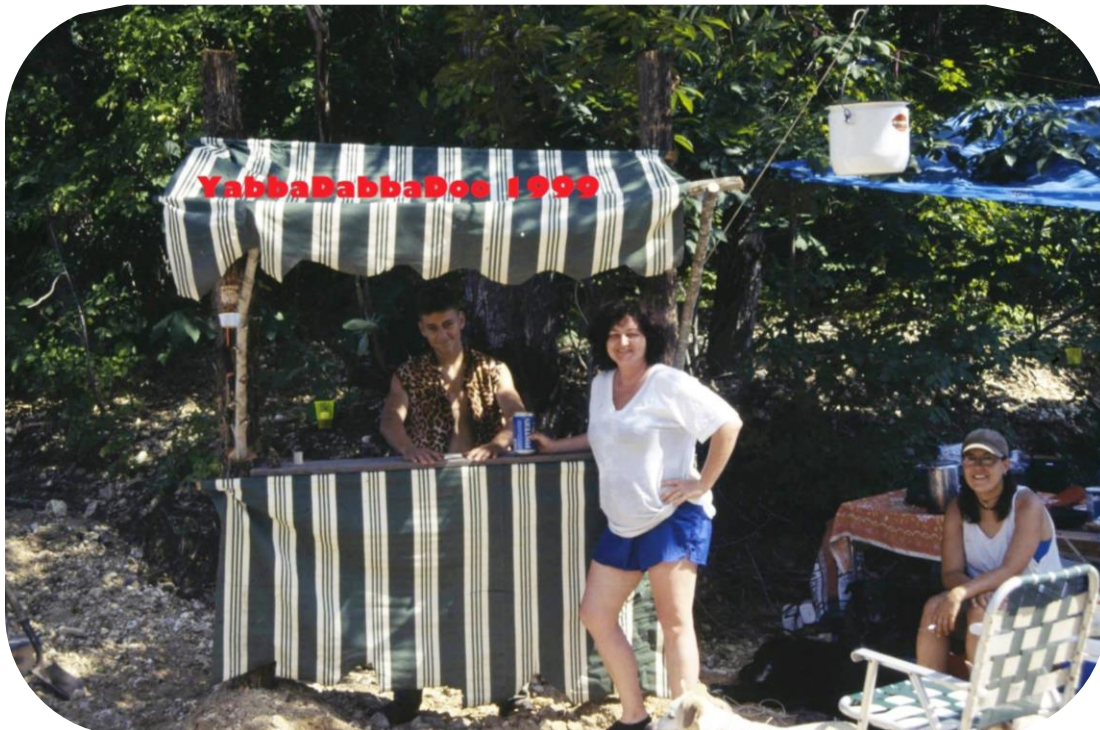
Jo Schaper and Brian Borton share special memories of Tim being infamous for his "Samoan Mystery Tours." As Jo and Brian shared, "These tours were pretty much the opposite of project caving. A Samoan Mystery Tour entailed

starting out with a group of friends and cave gear, with no particular destination in mind. Well, maybe a direction. Or a county as a destination. But the trip evolved as the day went on, more people were added to the trip and the destination sometimes changed. The object of the trip was to see 'Samoa' those Missouri caves, and have an adventure along the way." Way to go Tim for bringing us together!

Restaurant Camping

Doug "Digger" Feakes shares some of his favorite times with Tim on their travels and experiencing "Restaurant Camping." Since Tim was always so easy to talk with and such a good listener, he made friends everywhere he went around the globe. This became particularly helpful when stopping for supper while being on the road. Not only would Tim and his fellow travelers eat the meal and drink lots of beer, they would make friends with the restaurant owner. As the night would draw on, Tim would ask, "Where can we camp and/or spend the night?" Inevitably, the restaurant owner would allow them to spend the night there. They'd get up, have some breakfast and then hit the road again. And so is the story of how-to restaurant camp.

Pond Hollow – Judy's 44th Birthday Party – Yabba Dabba Do Theme



Tim planned an awesome event for his bride Judy for her 44th birthday party. Pond Hollow is in a remote section of Shannon County, MO. Tim ensured that no detail was spared for this once-in-a-lifetime celebration for his beautiful Judy. The gravel bar was complete with a fully stocked bar, and nephew Michael Pratt being the bartender, dressed in leopard skin, looking just like Fred Flinstone. Swimming hole, sauna, and candles lit everywhere – magical – the bar service was on a pulley system to the swimming hole. No one even had to get out of the water to get a fresh beer or a cocktail. As Judy shared, it was a “massively fun surprise birthday party.”

'Tim-isms' and Idiosyncrasies

On your first trip with Tim as the driver, you would quickly learn that he ALWAYS drove UNDER the speed limit. Always. Do not be in a hurry to get *anywhere!*

Tim believed “It is never too early for a beer.”



Tim was an inventor at heart, making what he wanted to suit his specific needs. With pride, he would often say, “I made this...”

Mitch Wieldt shares a particular "Tim-ism:" "It's human nature that we each like our own order. We keep things we deem precious and discard the rest. Tim was no exception. Tim's frustration of clutter reached the point that he painted (perhaps it was taped) a yellow square on the floor of his garage that was where items were to be placed after a trip. He wanted to be the one that cleaned, repaired, or discarded items before he put them back in their proper place." Mitch remembers Tim getting a tad anxious when items were unloaded and not placed "in the square." This square is known as the "landing zone."

Brian Borton shares: "Tim had a fondness for naming his vehicles. One of his most famous is 'Bete Roubista' – Bouncing Betty. Tim also named my truck during the El Abra trip: 'Domador de la Jungle' – Tamer of the Jungle."



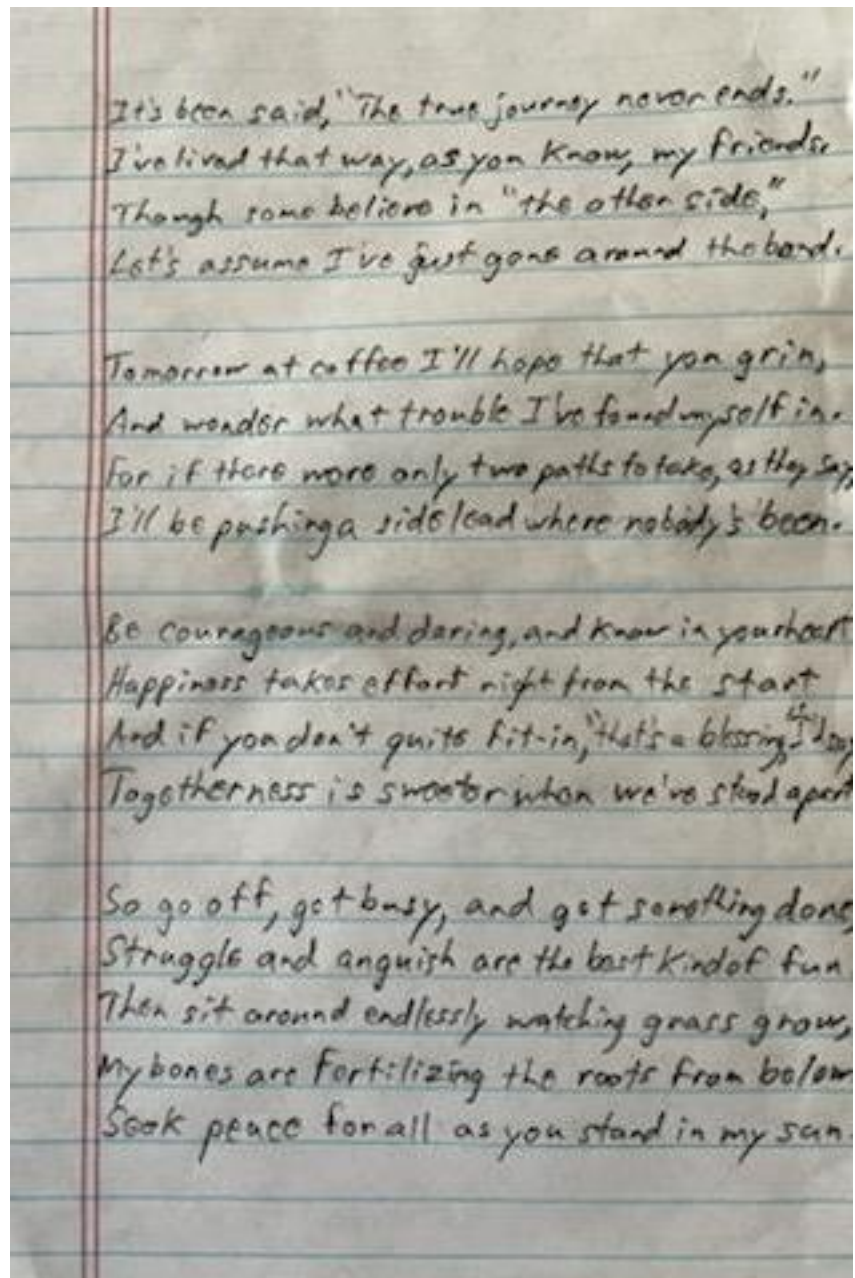
Another memorable "Tim-ism" from the Marciano's is that Tim would show up in their kitchen every morning for coffee and his crossword puzzle. They could still be at the kitchen table at 10:00 a.m. And some days they would try their homemade wine prior to leaving the kitchen . . . if they even left . . . to go to work that day!



As We Celebrate This Legendary Man

We encountered an interesting twist as we wrote this Memoir for OUR Legendary Man, Tim Harrison.

Judy found a file that Tim had started entitled "In the Event of My Death." He wrote his own poem for all of us:



Tim's dearest friend, Tom Panian, had four words to share with us "I love that man." Enough said.

Jo Schaper, a long-time caver friend and fellow explorer shares: "Tim's not entirely gone. His spirit ridge walks the hills along Blair Creek, skirts remote campfire shadows, a distant night glimmer under the rustling shortleaf pine, in the moonlight, where the wild horses run."

Joe Sherrell posted on Facebook: "May you rest on a beautiful gravel bar, with a line in the water and a beer in your hand, telling stories to the kids who are surrounding and hounding you for stories about the hairy tree pigs."

Digger says that Tim always thought about all the good times! And making more good times live in our memory. Let's take that with us as we celebrate this incredible man!





***If Tim could say one last thing to any of us, it would be:
"Ya gotta wanna."***





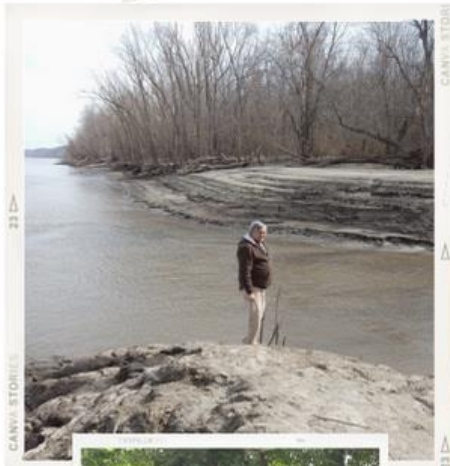
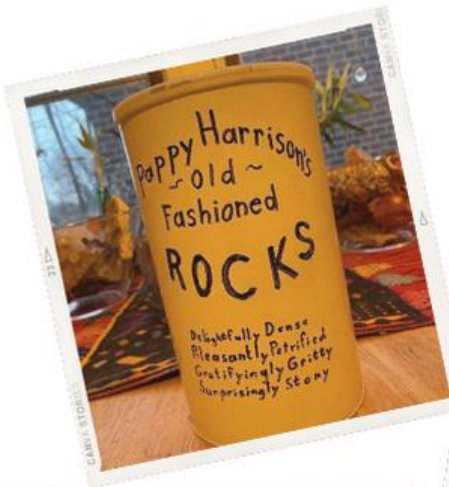
***RIP Timothy Bart Harrison.
You are cherished.
We Love YOU!***

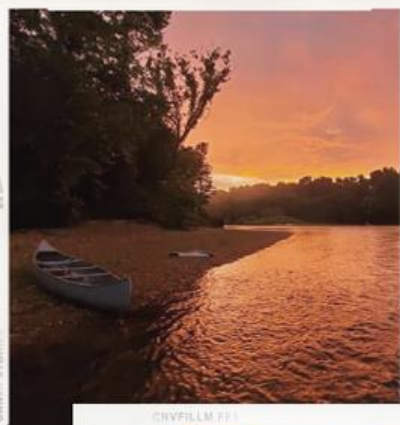
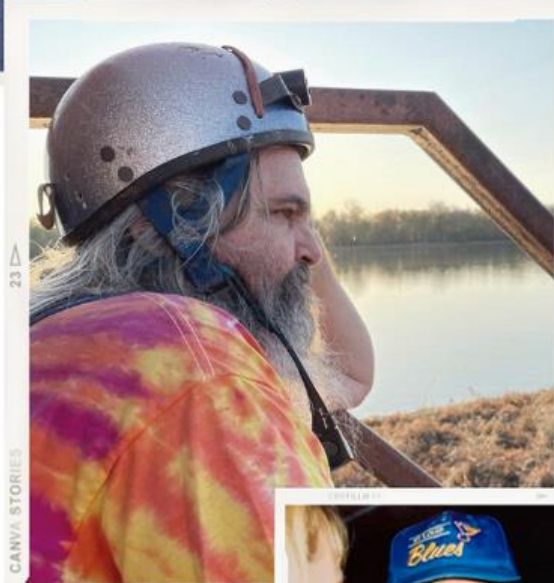
*Tim,
You enhanced and blessed my life for almost 40 years.
I will continue cherishing your ability to help me with "Ya Gotta Wanna!!"
It has been a privilege and an honor to author your Memoir.
With much love and adoration,
Mary*



Tim's Memoir

Authored by Mary Kausch







The Man, The Myth, The Legend

Tim Harrison

May 17, 1950 – December 21, 2020